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RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 1874
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DEPARTMENT FOR SCA AND INL

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TAGS: [SNAR](#) [PREL](#) [UNODC](#) [AF](#) [UZ](#)

SUBJECT: CENTRAL ASIANS AND AFGHANS TALK ABOUT PRECURSOR
CHEMICALS

Classified By: CDA Brad Hanson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (SBU) Representatives of the five Central Asian countries and Afghanistan participated in a conference on narcotics precursor chemicals May 3-4 in Tashkent. The conference, organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), was intended as the first step towards the development of a joint strategy and operational activities to suppress trafficking in precursors, particularly acetic anhydride, to Afghanistan. UNODC presented the findings of a recent study which found that Central Asia's borders with Afghanistan are at risk for precursor trafficking, and recommended the development and increased sharing of information about legitimate production and exports of precursor chemicals in Central Asia as well as about seizures of controlled chemicals. UNODC also announced that a second phase of Operation Transshipment, a joint program focused on increasing precursor chemicals seizures in Central Asia, is planned for later in 2007.

12. (C) Comment: As with most UNODC-sponsored conferences, little in the way of concrete results came from this meeting. However, UNODC's Regional Representative believes that the value of the meeting was that for the first time the Central Asians sat down with Afghanistan and had a serious conversation about precursor chemicals. We tend to agree. However, we are still concerned at the attitude of most of the Central Asian states, which seem to believe that no seizures of precursor chemicals year after year is a positive sign, as, in their minds, it shows that no precursors are being trafficked across their borders into Afghanistan. As Afghan representatives have commented, the chemicals are coming from somewhere, and will never be stopped until the countries on Afghanistan's borders at the very least start looking for them.
HANSON